



# 2021 - 2023 Strategic Plan

# Duchesne County Library System

## 2021-2023 Strategic Plan

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### Mission & Vision

The mission of Duchesne County Library System is to enrich our residents' knowledge and inspire their growth. Through these efforts the library envisions our residents empowered to strengthen each other and unite their communities.

### Core Values

Provide access to needed information resources and experiences; including the preservation of local history.

Gather the community and build bridges across diverse groups.

Promote patron input on materials, programs, and services; including sharing their expertise in library programs.

Promote staff learning and innovation to continually provide improving service.

### Focus Areas

#### Introduction

Duchesne County Library System endeavors to serve a county population of approximately 19,900 residents as of 2019. The county has an area of 3,256 sq. mi. Approximately 33.4% of the population is under 18 years of age (6,660 youth) and 12.4% is over 65 years of age (2,470 adults). 84.6% identifies as white (16,880), 8.3% as Hispanic or Latino (1,650), 4.9% as American Indian or Alaskan native (970), and 2.2% as other races (440). 87.9% graduated high school and 14.4% completed a bachelor's degree or higher. 11.9% live in poverty (2,370) and the median income is \$63,900.<sup>1</sup> Unemployment is at 4.6%. The principle industries are mining, government, real estate/rentals.<sup>2</sup>

During the 2018-2020 strategic plan cycle, the Duchesne County Library System achieved various goals. Some of the major highlights include:

- Gathering community input concerning a new Roosevelt Branch and presenting a feasibility study
- Purchasing a lot and selecting an architect for the new Roosevelt Branch

<sup>1</sup> "Quick facts: Duchesne County, UT." Found on <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/duchesnecountyutah/PST045219> on Aug. 18, 2020

<sup>2</sup> "Duchesne County, UT." Found on [explorer.naco.org](https://explorer.naco.org) on Aug. 18, 2020.

- Successfully receiving funding from the Permanent Community Impact Board for the new Roosevelt Branch
- Renovating and opening of a History Center at Duchesne Branch
- Continuing partnerships with USU Extension, Duchesne Arts Council and others in hosting events
- Initiating county owned eBook and eAudiobook collections
- Initiating weekly outreach services offered at Altamont, Tabiona, and Parkside Manor
- Upgrading patron and staff computers, copy machines, and Internet speeds
- A new state-of-the-art patron catalog was released, making searching and browsing across all Uintah Basin libraries much more user friendly
- DCLS receiving the Quality Library Award recognition by Utah State Library

Library administration is grateful for the progress made these past three years, even in the face of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in the plan's final year. It has indeed had an effect on the library's services and will yet continue into the 2021-2023 plan. After releasing a public survey to gather suggestions for the new plan and discussions with the library staff and board it has been determined that the principal goals of the 2018-2020 plan are to be continued but moved forward into their next phases. Some anticipated effects of the ongoing pandemic are also reflected in the goals.

Despite the challenges that must yet pass, 2021-2023 look to be historic years for the Duchesne County Library. Much is anticipated during this time including: the construction and opening of Duchesne County Library's largest branch, the reopening of full library service and programming, the further expansion of the Uintah Basin libraries exchange and consortium to the Heber Valley, and improved access to Duchesne County's historical archives.

All these efforts are founded on the same principles that motivated DCL's progress the past three years. The library as an institution is much more than a storage space and borrowing system for physical and electronic materials. The library's purpose is based on its community members and in meeting their long-term growth and opportunity. This is regardless of the continual changes in resources and technology. Despite the distinct focus on the Roosevelt Branch milestone in the next three years, DCL continues to strive to provide as much library service as possible across the entirety of Duchesne County and all its residents, each of which are of equal importance.

Library services will continue to strive to be an information and technology springboard for all and to be a beating community heart as a public forum to again allow community gatherings, large and small, to explore shared interests, talents, education, creativity, and growth. By doing so the library system continues to strive for its greatest potential, and be the most worthwhile investment possible for all county residents.

This plan is considered a living document and will be adjusted as needs, opportunities, and challenges change. The six continuing focus areas selected to address the most recurring needs over the next few years are:

- **Community Hub of Opportunity** – As a community heart and forum, the library is a center of gathering, learning, and opportunity. Information about needed community resources and agencies, and about the community members’ own interests, whether they be creative, recreational, scholarly, etc., can be found here. Our richest source of knowledge is the community members themselves, other dedicated professionals in the community, and their expertise. The library welcomes ALL to participate in and utilize it to progress together.
- **Outreach / Awareness** – Library service is not limited to the library buildings and should extend throughout the county. The public has also expressed the need to be made more adequately aware of what services the public’s investment is providing and what their importance is to them. An increased variety of public awareness tools will be employed to do so.
- **Regional History** – Our local history and heritage—often comprised of irreplaceable, original items—is often not easily accessible and is at risk of permanent loss by degradation or disasters. If not taken care of at their region of origin, they are often moved to distant larger collections. The Duchesne County History Center—a service of the Duchesne County Library System—began to meet this need of local preservation, to assist Duchesne County citizens in accessing and even contributing to these precious resources, and enable citizen historians and students to explore the past and better understand the present. Though COVID-19 has reduced the resources available for its continuing operation, as many efforts that can be afforded to continue its progress will occur to continue to preserve our shared story.
- **Lifelong Learning** – Along with our community’s primary, secondary, and paid post-secondary education partners, the library is a primary institution that can provide resources for continual lifelong learning and progress, complementing these partners’ efforts. Specifically, the library will focus on providing much greater access to electronic materials across the county and programming for various patron age groups and learning interests.
- **Roosevelt Branch** – Various preparation phases to construct a new Roosevelt Branch were accomplished by 2020. A location, design, and funding was secured. 2021 will hopefully see the initiation of construction which is scheduled to be completed in by spring of 2022. The new facility will provide often requested functions including community space, meeting rooms, a larger collection, a tech lab, teen space, and individual work areas.
- **Accessibility to Technology** – Though the majority of county residents have access to computers and the Internet, not all county residents do; particularly low-income residents. Many county residents don’t have access to other technologies, including audio and video editing, 3D printing, virtual reality, and more due to expense, physical space limitations, etc. People may also be unaware of what possibilities are now available to enhance their creativity and progress. The library will be a technology on-ramp for all.

Each focus area’s specific goals and their context over the next three years are detailed below. They can also be found in the Strategic Plan Table.

## Community Hub of Opportunity

Patrons often need help from local community services and may not be aware of them. All of us also have a variety of expertise and interests that others would benefit from and have interest in as well. As a community hub, the library provides a welcome venue for people to gather to learn about those resources and interests from experts and each other. Aside from providing a venue, the library will encourage and cooperate with community partners and individuals to sponsor such opportunities. Some examples include providing space and funding for the Utah State University Extension to host Food Sense, Family Meals, and Love and Logic courses. The Uintah Basin's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA) has provided free tax assistance for many county residents at the Duchesne Branch with advertising help and document processing assistance from the library staff. The Duchesne Arts Council partnered with the library to host summer Art Galas and competitions. A beginning Spanish course, Girl Scouts, and other non-library sponsored programs have also utilized the library to educate and enjoy their neighbors' company. Roosevelt Branch welcomed rangers from Dinosaur National Monument to co-sponsor a large event and with its new facility will be able to host many more co-sponsored events they have not been able to in the past. The newly formed Roosevelt Parks, Arts, and Recreation Committee has also given the library a seat in the group to further cultivate coordination of community efforts.

The library system will continue these current collaborations while seeking new partnerships with other local organizations and individuals to provide an even greater variety of relevant events. The availability of staff to collaborate with all of these organizations will be monitored, particularly throughout the budget shortfalls due to COVID-19 economic impacts. The library will do all it can to maintain and build new collaborations within the staff limitations it has. Staff will also continue to attend professional development opportunities to learn about library trends and new programming ideas the staff can bring to the community that may not have been previously considered by anyone.

The Duchesne Branch is also in need of assistance devices to open the doors. Various patrons struggle with mobility or simply have their arms full of young children or other materials, making accessibility to the facility a challenge. In 2020, the Utah State Library announced that the Community Library Enhancement Fund provided by the Utah State Legislature could now be utilized in purchasing such equipment. The 2021 CLEF allotment to Duchesne County Library will be used to assist in purchasing these entrance devices which will hopefully be installed by the end of 2021.

## Outreach/Awareness

All residents of Duchesne County should be able to receive service from the library as much as possible, which requires services to extend beyond its physical facilities particularly to areas that have had no county library presence since the county bookmobile dissolved. The towns of northern and western Duchesne County have suffered the most from that loss.

In 2018 the library created an Outreach Coordinator position at Duchesne Branch. This staff member has been hosting a weekly offsite library at the Moon Lake Building in Altamont on Tuesday evenings and at the Tabiona Community Center on Wednesday evenings. The Tabiona site has seen regular use from the community, while the Altamont site has had more limited use throughout 2018 and

2019. In Roosevelt, a staff member has also hosted weekly offsite library service at Parkside Manor and The Villa Rehabilitation Center. Parkside Manor has been particularly successful and well received. The Villa was met with limited use and success by its residents.

Drop boxes are provided at Upper Country Market in Altamont, the Tabiona Community Center, and The Big G in Fruitland. The Uintah Basin Association of Governments Aging Bus service agreed to empty and courier items from each of those boxes to the Duchesne Branch for a reasonable annual stipend. The drop boxes have been successful, with the biggest use in Altamont.

The drop box courier service will continue to be provided as will the offsite libraries at Tabiona, Parkside Manor and Altamont. The ongoing success of all site services will continue to be evaluated, with particular attention to Altamont. If the weekly service continues to receive little attention after COVID-19 challenges have past, consideration of a set of new holds lockers may be considered instead. The lockers would be filled at least once a week by staff with the holds from patrons at that area to pick up at their convenience. The set requires an indoor space, power connection, and Internet connection. A suitable location would need to be discussed with the Altamont community leaders and stakeholders. This idea may also be tried soon in Uintah County and Duchesne County Library will watch the progress of the experiment carefully while evaluating its possible utility in our unique scenarios. If such a service change is made successfully in our area, other lockers around the county may be explored before the end of this strategic plan cycle.

A new opportunity presented itself in 2020 with Wasatch County Library. The new director and their staff expressed great interest in joining the Basin Libraries Consortium and catalog. Uintah and Duchesne County Libraries have been working through the plans to add Wasatch County Library to the catalog and considering the most economical methods of sharing items across the greater distance. Among the most cost effective seems to be by mail from a central location such as Roosevelt Branch, which could then distribute the items through the current courier service among the three libraries in the Uintah Basin. COVID-19 has delayed immediate progress on these efforts. Wasatch County Library currently remains closed to the public, but is offering curbside assistance. When those restrictions are lifted and the library is able to resume more typical operations, the plans for resource sharing will resume and cost effectiveness of the attempted methods evaluated. Adding Wasatch County Library to the consortium will be particularly beneficial to patrons in the Tabiona Valley who often travel to Heber City for shopping and other commercial venues. Patrons across the Uintah Basin will be able to circulate items at Wasatch County Library, expanding the variety of item choices available to them. In early 2021 the Memorandum of Understanding between Uintah and Duchesne County Libraries will be expanded to include Wasatch County Library, formalizing the agreement.

Concerning awareness and advertising of library services, the library expanded its social media presence beyond Facebook to Instagram and Pinterest at each branch. The History Center successfully launched a Facebook page that has been a great tool in sharing historical photos and quickly gathering information about them. An online newsletter at both branches was launched in 2019 utilizing the Smore platform. 765 email accounts receive the Duchesne Branch newsletter and 1980 email accounts receive the Roosevelt Branch newsletter. This has been a very cost effective and wide reaching method

to share news, highlights of events, products, and more. Each of the above digital methods will continue to be employed. A mailer will also be considered from time to time for county residents who lack access to the Internet.

The use of the library system's current website grew out of necessity during COVID-19; however, despite its basic functionality, improvements can be made in its accessibility, mobile friendliness, and attractiveness. Various platforms and web site construction will be investigated during the next three years to inform a decision on the most effective and affordable option to improve this resource.

Finally, the library also made contacts with some local schools to look at partnering or assisting with literacy nights or other pertinent events. Unfortunately with tight educator schedules plans never bloomed each year though interest continued for both parties. Once the restrictions of COVID-19 are overcome, the library will again pursue opportunities to partner with and assist our local schools, not only on events but other services.

## Regional History

We believe in *our* story; our history. We grow from it, learn from it, and are informed by it. From family history to experiencing tangible artifacts first-hand, our history and what it can give us is absolutely worth preserving. Unlike the widely produced popular materials the library provides, the History Center—located at the Duchesne Branch—focuses on collections of irreplaceable unique and local items.

In 2018 space was renovated adjacent to the Duchesne Branch to create a more functional History Center. It opened for regular weekday hours with a History Center Manager in early 2019. During that time all of the photo negatives given to the History Center were scanned and an index begun. The History Center Facebook page launched and many photos were shared. Hundreds of people began following the page and the Manager crowd-sourced or collected the descriptive information about the photos provided by many people in their comments; such as the who, what, where, and when of the photo. This social media effort has proven to be a far more effective method than trying to attract people physically into the History Center to provide the same information. Meanwhile, published family histories, yearbooks, and books about Duchesne County were cataloged and added to the collection. The History Center volunteers also continued their long-time work on updating the headstone information and indexing of many of the county's cemeteries. In all of these efforts, the library is striving to curate and make widely available this historical information while keeping local history in a local venue rather than sending items to a distant location. During 2019 the History Center received only 120 visitors in-person; however, the interaction digitally with the History Centers collections was far greater as mentioned previously.

Now in 2020, the continuing success of the History Center is challenged for the next few years due to budget shortfalls from the economic setbacks of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the last year, two part-time staff members and the full-time History Center Manager voluntarily departed for other work and family opportunities. In anticipation of the budget shortfalls, library administration allowed those positions to go unfilled in an effort to preserve other ongoing library staff and program needs. As such,

the History Center will likely be without a full-time manager through this triennial strategic plan. This is a sore loss to the library system and its goals.

Despite that reality, the History Center volunteers will continue working on the cemetery index project as they have for more than a decade. Some of the Duchesne Branch staff is taking on some of the History Center's projects including the Facebook page and photo information gathering and indexing. The Duchesne Branch management is being trained in the History Center collections and will take appointments throughout the weekday to help patrons in the History Center as needed.

Much work in the past has also been done to preserve hard copies of pertinent newspaper articles and to organize them into subject category folders, such as "Veterans" or "Uintah Basin in Celebration." There is now a new opportunity for patrons to access this information more efficiently than through sifting through those folders in-person at the History Center. The new patron catalog, Aspen Discovery, has capabilities to add catalog records that connect to the many digitized local newspapers kept at the University of Utah's Utah Newspapers Collection. Patrons should be able to search the library catalog on a topic and find records with links to digitized articles of our local newspapers in the U of U digital archive. Through the next few years, the Duchesne Branch staff and History Center volunteers will be trained on how to create these records, search through the U of U archive, and link to those articles. Library administration will also work with our local newspapers to digitize their more recent publications after a moratorium period to allow the newspapers to successfully and profitably continue producing the most current news.

Necessary infrastructure such as climate and light control to preserve the collection is also being planned and budgeted for. Library administration will investigate the process of becoming a full partner in the State of Utah's Regional Repository Program.

## Lifelong Learning

Following general education in the school system the library functions as an educational institution available to all patrons throughout their lives. Recreational and scholarly ideas and information are available nearly anytime for a person's personal growth and enjoyment. One method the library accommodates this is by pursuing many patron requests for specific materials. These requested items are often purchased for the collection, borrowed from the Duchesne-Uintah county partnership, or are sought in the nation-wide interlibrary loan system. These efforts will continue for physical materials and will be expanded with the future addition of Wasatch County Library into the Basin Libraries Consortium.

The circulation of eBooks and eAudiobooks continues its rise. In 2018 Duchesne County Library began purchasing eBooks and eAudiobooks in addition to those provided by the Beehive Library Consortium OverDrive collection (previously known as the Utah State Library Consortium). These county purchased items are only available to patrons with a Duchesne County Library account. These eMaterials are pricy and the county has only been purchasing items requested by patrons that the Beehive Library Consortium has not provided and items that our patrons are waiting for whose hold ratio is over 10 patrons to 1 item. The library tried to purchase items at a 5:1 ratio, but found the annual



costs to be too expensive. No other eBooks and eAudiobooks outside of these two scenarios are being purchased. The library will continue to strive to provide requested eBooks and eAudiobooks as budgets will allow. To further help lower costs, the library is purchasing more eMaterials for a limited time license or by a cost per circulation format, rather than buying a lifetime license on items. Such methods will likely result in aggregate savings.

Patrons have also begun to request access to Hoopla; a digital lending service that provides eAudiobooks, eBooks, movies, and music. This service is a cost per circulation service and patrons would have a maximum checkout limit each month. As costs in OverDrive are managed more efficiently this should free up some funding to be reallocated to provide this service.

Other electronic resources include the collection of databases that Utah Public Online Library provides. They feature encyclopedias, magazine articles, history and hobby databases, job search resources, local newspaper archives and more. Many patrons are unaware of these current resources. Language, online high school work, and small business information databases could be considered for purchase by the library to supplement the state provided resources. Though the library helped many patrons with the OverDrive collections, not much attention was given to the training and promotion of the online databases this past three years. New attempts will be made to learn about and share those resources this coming strategic plan cycle now that the OverDrive platform is established and understood. As the library promotes all of these digital resources, including the library's catalog, interest and usage will be monitored. Budgets will be adjusted accordingly to meet demand and the library will investigate new resources as they are released. Print brochures and online tutorials to guide patrons through these resources will also be made available.

## **Roosevelt Branch**

We believe the main goal of the new library is to better provide opportunity and growth to our communities. A new facility will increase availability to technology, recreation, learning, and community progress. Group collaboration large and small will be made possible. It will be more welcoming and comfortable. We will strive to meet the current needs of the community, and look forward to how to better serve all of its citizens in the future.

In the summer of 2018, the library surveyed over 100 users and non-users of the library to find out what they would want in a new facility. Two open focus groups were held at the library as well, most being frequent library users. All of this feedback was collected and the library board commissioned a feasibility study to assess whether a new facility or remodel of the current facility would be possible based on the expressed needs of the community. The findings were presented in two public meetings in October 2018. Nearly unanimously, the public voiced their support for a new library rather than a remodel and agreed with the proposed functional spaces of the library.

Throughout 2019 the library board investigated various locations for the new library. In late 2019, Roosevelt City agreed to sale to the library board the two western ball fields of Central Park the lie along 200 West for the location of the new library. In summer 2020, the library board received twelve submissions in response to a request for qualifications from architects. Jones and DeMille Engineering,

partnering with Kim Campbell and Associates, was selected in August 2020. The design of the building and its systems is nearing completion.

In December 2020 the project was be presented to the Permanent Community Impact Board for funding. The board voted to place the project on their priority funding list with a \$3,423,750 loan at 0.5% for 30 years and a \$1,141,250 grant; resulting in an annual payment of around \$125,000. The Board will officially fund the project at the February 2020 meeting. The project will be released for bidding by late February. Requests for proposals to install the Internet infrastructure will be made in accordance with the Federal Communications Commission ERate program, which will hopefully provide significant reimbursements on that new infrastructure. After a successful bidding process, it is anticipated that construction will begin by April 2021 and complete in early 2022. The current library, originally built by Roosevelt City, will be returned to their oversight. The library collection, equipment, and services will move over in spring of 2022 followed by the facility's grand opening. Events, circulation, and other services will begin as soon as possible.

### Accessibility to Technology

A practical state mandated piece of all library strategic plans is to address continuing patron access to ever-changing technology. Over the past two years the library system's technology efforts have included upgrading all patron computers and many staff computers in both branches; new fax machines were acquired; Duchesne Branch upgraded their patron copier/scanner and 3D printer; the Internet speed at both branches was also doubled to up to 1 gigabyte service speed; and a new state-of-the-art patron catalog interface called Aspen Discovery was launched. This new feature makes searching and browsing in the patron catalog much more user friendly and simpler.

In the immediate future, COVID-19 presents challenges for our patrons, particularly those who may be educating their children from home and may need help to access the internet. The library received a Library Services and Technology Act grant through the Utah State Library to acquire WiFi hotspots for patrons to lend and use at home for at least 2021 and 2022. The effectiveness of that program and its ongoing costs will be evaluated at that time. WiFi accessible patron printing will be established in each library. The new Roosevelt Library will introduce a new tech lab that will provide computers, a 3D printer, a Cricut machine, Adobe Photoshop and Premier (video editing) software, and other technology available for patron use. That library will also provide much more seating and power connections for patrons to use their own technology at. Laptops will also be provided for in-library use to allow people to work flexibly throughout the library, including parents and caregivers who are accompanying their children in the children's areas. The library staff will also attend professional development opportunities to learn about other new patron technology offerings as they become available. Budgets are being allocated to meet those needs as available.

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